

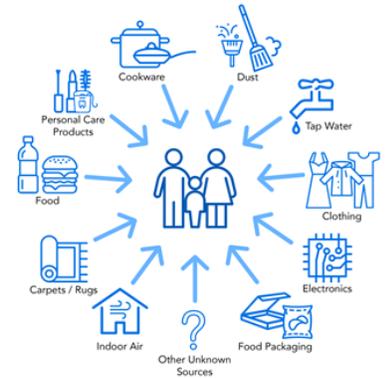
Eliminate PFAS & Other Toxic Chemicals from Consumer Products

S.25 will ban harmful chemicals from personal care and menstrual products, textiles, and artificial turf.

Why do we need to act?

Exposure to PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals,” already affects the lives of Vermonters. We know that it is found in virtually all our landfilled waste and in our drinking water, surface water, and soils. The human health effects of PFAS, as well as all the chemicals covered by this bill like phthalates and formaldehyde, are extensively documented by peer reviewed research and science.

- PFAS have been found to cause cancers, thyroid disease, liver and kidney toxicity, reproductive and developmental toxicity, and harm to the immune system.¹
- Phthalates are a class of hormone-disrupting chemicals that have been found to threaten reproductive harm, lower fertility, increase risk of testicular and prostate cancer, and add to “brain drain” symptoms like increased ADHD.²
- Formaldehyde is a known carcinogen. Formaldehyde in cosmetics is widely understood to cause allergic skin reactions and rashes in some people.



Graphic Credit: NRDC

Keep children safe

Children are more acutely vulnerable to any level of exposure toxic chemicals. Early exposure to toxics is especially concerning due to the accumulative nature of chemicals like PFAS. Vermont has already acted to protect children from toxic chemicals with the 2014 passage of Act 188 which created the Chemicals of High Concern to Children (CHCC), a list of 89 chemicals that manufacturers must report on if used in children’s products.

Despite these reporting requirements, many toxic chemicals on the CHCC list are still in cosmetic products used by children and adults alike. Kids are regularly exposed to personal care products like shampoo, hair detangler, sunscreen, lotion, and more on a daily basis. Furthermore, kids start using makeup like blush and lipstick as early as six years old for special occasions. That’s why S.25 proposes to ban several of Vermont’s established CHCC from personal care products.

Vermont can act now to address the threat from toxic chemicals

S.25 would ban toxic chemicals from many products through which we are intimately exposed.

- ❖ **Personal care products;** The toxicity of chemicals used in personal care products/cosmetics has been an open secret for decades, but despite work in other places like the EU and Canada to ban hundreds to thousands of harmful chemicals from cosmetics, our federal government has very little regulatory agency

¹ Environmental Protection Agency. *Basic Information on PFAS*. Retrieved 3-18-20 from <https://www.epa.gov/pfas/basic-information-pfas>; Toxic-Free Future. *PFAS: A Nonstick Nightmare*. Retrieved 3-18-20 from <https://toxicfreefuture.org/key-issues/chemicals-of-concern/pfas-nonstick-nightmare/#PFASexposure>.

² Environmental Health Strategy Center. (April 2019). *Safer Alternatives to Phthalates are Widely Available*. Retrieved from <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/Senate%20Health%20and%20Welfare/Bills/S.295/Written%20Testimony/S.295~Patrick%20MacRoy~5.%20FS%20-%20Phthalate%20Alternatives~2-28-2020.pdf>.

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An Act to Restrict PFAS and Other Chemicals of Concern in Consumer Products

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to determine the safety of these products and has banned only 11 chemicals.³ As a result, we've seen asbestos in kids' makeup, mercury and formaldehyde in hair products aggressively marketed to women of color, and PFAS in over half of makeup surveyed.⁴⁻⁵⁻⁶ While there's a lot we still don't know about the safety of chemicals used in cosmetics, this bill proposes to ban several of the most dangerous that have already been phased out by other states, countries, and major retailers like CVS, Walgreens, and Target.

- ❖ **Period Products;** Period products are used on and in highly sensitive and absorptive parts of our bodies, which makes it important to understand the potential chemical exposures associated with their use. Research shows that many of today's menstrual and intimate care products contain a host of chemicals linked to cancer, disrupt hormones, and result in unnecessary allergic reactions. The FDA does not require companies to test for all harmful chemicals, nor do they require companies to disclose the presence of all chemicals used in these products.⁷
- ❖ **Textiles;** PFAS can be used to make textiles like apparel stain and water resistant. Textiles made with PFAS release chemicals over time into our air and dust, then they release their toxins into landfills and subsequently into leachate and waterways.⁸ Landfill testing done by Casella showed **textiles and carpets provided the highest mass flux of PFAS compared to other types of waste disposed.**⁹ Of the water systems tested in Vermont under Act 21, several that came back with high levels of PFAS are near ski resorts. Though the ANR is unable to draw a definitive connection, research shows PFAS can be found in the soil underneath ski tracks once snow has melted.¹⁰ This body acted to ban PFAS from ski wax in 2021; banning PFAS from ski gear is a logical next step. California banned PFAS from all textiles in 2022.
- ❖ **Turf;** [Testing done by the Ecology Center and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility \(PEER\)](#) shows hazardous chemicals present in artificial turf. Elemental fluorine and several per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were found in artificial turf, suggesting that PFAS is an ingredient of the carpet grass fibers or the backing, or a byproduct of the manufacturing process. Exposure to PFAS chemicals may be a concern while the kids are running, sliding, falling, and playing on the artificial turf (and families are sitting on it).

³ Food and Drug Administration, Prohibited & Restricted Ingredients in Cosmetics, Retrieved 3-2-2023. <https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetics-laws-regulations/prohibited-restricted-ingredients-cosmetics>

⁴ Environmental Working Group, *Alert: Tests Find High Levels of Asbestos in Children's Makeup Kit*, Retrieved 3-14-2024. <https://www.ewg.org/news-insights/news-release/alert-tests-find-high-levels-asbestos-childrens-makeup-kit>

⁵ Washington State Department of Ecology, Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program and Environmental Assessment Program, *Chemicals in Cosmetics Used by Washington Residents*, <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2304007.pdf>

⁶ Environmental Science and Technology Letters (June 2021), Retrieved 3-14-2023, <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.estlett.1c00240>

⁷ Women's Voices for the Earth. *Menstrual Care Products & Toxic Chemicals*. Retrieved 3-14-23 from <https://womensvoices.org/menstrual-care-products/>.

⁸ Toxic-Free Future. *PFAS: A Nonstick Nightmare*. Retrieved 3-18-20 from <https://toxicfreefuture.org/key-issues/chemicals-of-concern/pfas-nonstick-nightmare/#PFASexposure>.

⁹ Report by Bryan Redmond, Chuck Schwer, and Matt Chapman of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources to the Vermont Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy February 14, 2020.

¹⁰ Albert, J. (July 2019). *The EPA and Regulating the Ski Wax Industry*. Retrieved from <https://fasterskier.com/fsarticle/the-epa-and-regulating-the-ski-wax-industry/>.

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